

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

OMB-01 DPW-01 NIC-01 IO-13 EUR-25 RSR-01 /121 W

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R 080930 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2864

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAIGON 10241

E. O. 11652 NA

TAGS: PINS, VS

SUBJ: GVN OFFICIAL STATES MRS NGO BA THANH TO BE RELEASED TO
COMMUNISTS

REF: SAIGON 10153 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON MRS NGO BA THANH, SUPPLEMENTING
THAT CONTAINED REFTEL, WAS GIVEN EMBOFFS JUNE 7 BY LT. GENERAL
CAO HAO HON, CHAIRMAN OF INTERMINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON IMPLI-
MENTATION OF THE CEASE- FIRE. GENERAL HON TOLD EMBOFFS THAT
DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN THAT MRS THANH WOULD DEFINITELY BE AT
TOP OF LIST FOR RELEASE WHEN NEXT GROUP OF CIVILIAN PRISONERS IS
TURNED OVER TO COMMUNISTS. AT TIME OF EXCHANGE, MRS THANH,
" LIKE ANY OTHER CIVILIAN OR MILITARY PRISONER", WOULD HAVE OPTION
OF ACCEPTING THE " TURN OVER", OR OF " SEEKING FREEDOM" BY GIVING
SOME INDICATION THAT SHE WISHES TO REMAIN UNDER JURISDICTION OF
GVN. GENERAL HON WAS IMPRECISE, PLEADING UNFAMILIARITY WITH
DETAILS OF FILE, WHEN QUESTIONED WHETHER MRS THANH WOULD HAVE TO
PETITION GVN FORMALLY OR ADMIT COMMUNIST AFFILIATION.

2. COMMENT: CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL HON CORROBORATES
INFORMATION GIVEN EMBOFFS EARLIER BY MOI CHIEF OF CABINET (REFTEL).
GVN MAY CONSIDER THIS MANEUVER WILL FORCE MRS THANH TO PLEDGE
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SUPPORT TO GVN TO AVOID BEING BRANDED A COMMUNIST AND EVADE
PHYSICAL HARDSHIP OF TRAVEL TO AND THROUGH VC AREAS. HOWEVER,
PROPOSED " SCENARIO" RAISES A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS FOR GVN.
PRINCIPAL ONE WOULD APPEAR TO BE HOW, GIVEN PRESENT STATE OF MRS
THANH' S HEALTH, TURNOVER COULD PHYSICALLY BE ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT
EXTREMELY ADVERSE REACTIONS. IT IS ALSO UNCLEAR WHETHER, SHOULD
MRS THANH OPT FOR " FREEDOM", FURTHER PROCEEDINGS AGAINST HER
WOULD BE DROPPED. EMBOFFS EMPHASIZED TO HON DEGREE TO WHICH
INTERNATIONAL AND US ATTENTION HAD FOCUSED ON THANH CASE
STRESSING THAT WERE SHE TO DIE OR SERIOUS HARM BEFALL HER, THIS WOULD
CAUSE THE GVN DAMAGE FAR OUTWEIGHING ANY CONCEIVABLE ADVANTAGE IN
DETAINING HER FURTHER.
WHITEHOUSE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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